



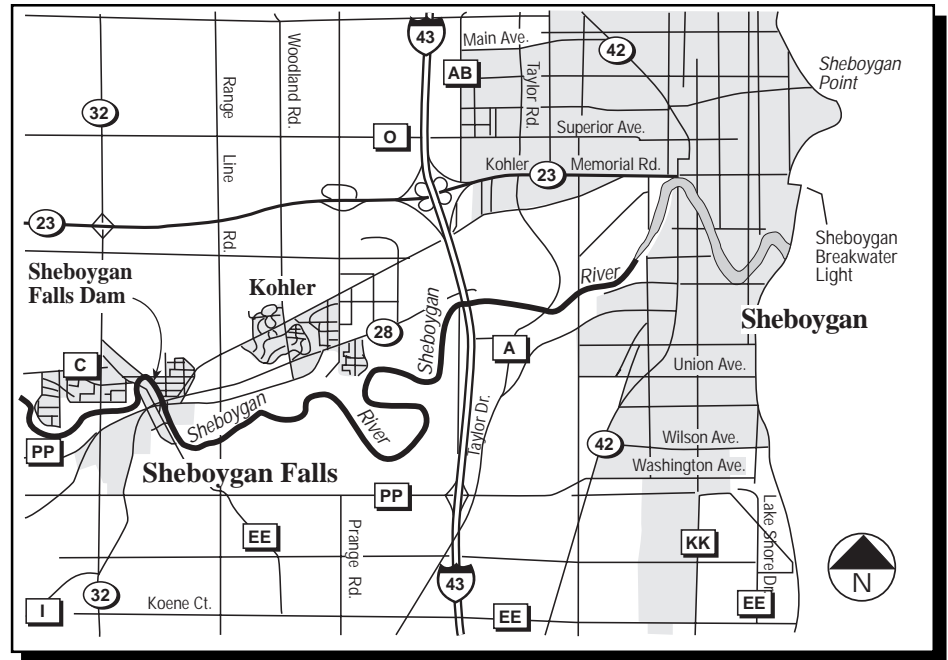
## Feasibility Study Nears Completion for Sheboygan River and Harbor Superfund Site

Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

November 1998

### This Update Will Tell You About

- Completed site activities
- U.S. EPA's new project manager
- How you can obtain more information about the site
- The Natural Resource Trustees



Location Map

### Introduction

This update will provide information about the work completed to date at the Sheboygan River and Harbor Superfund site, the schedule for upcoming site activities, and whom you can contact for more information.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) will provide additional information regarding the site as significant milestones are reached.

### Site Background

The Sheboygan River and Harbor site (See Location Map) includes the lower 14 miles of the Sheboygan River from the Sheboygan Falls Dam downstream to, and including, the harbor. This segment of the river flows through Sheboygan Falls, Kohler, and Sheboygan before entering Lake Michigan. The Sheboygan River drains 280 square miles in east central Wisconsin.

The river was divided into three sec-

tions based on its physical characteristics as part of the Remedial Investigation (RI) of the site. The RI is a study to determine the nature and extent of contamination. The Upper River extends 4 miles from the Sheboygan Falls Dam downstream to the Waelderhaus Dam in Kohler. The Upper River is 100 to 120 feet wide and typically 2 to 4 feet deep. The Onion River flows into the Sheboygan River in this segment.

The Middle River extends 7 miles from the Waelderhaus Dam to the railroad bridge. The Middle River is approximately 100 feet wide and typically a few inches to 2 feet deep.

The Lower River extends 3 miles from the railroad bridge to the Pennsylvania Avenue bridge in downtown Sheboygan. The Lower River is approximately 150 feet wide but widens to 300 feet wide near the harbor. Depth ranges from 1 to 20 feet.

The Inner Harbor includes the Sheboygan River from the Pennsylvania Avenue



bridge to the river's outlet to the Outer Harbor. The Inner Harbor is approximately 250 feet wide and its depth ranges from 1 foot (near shore) to 20 feet. The Outer Harbor is defined as the area formed by the two breakwalls. The Outer Harbor depth ranges from 1 to 28 feet. The Sheboygan Marina in the Outer Harbor is not part of the Sheboygan River and Harbor Superfund site.

Land use along the river is industrial and residential in Sheboygan Falls. The Kohler Company owns land adjacent to the river in Kohler. Land use in this area consists of a horse farm, tree nursery, and the company's historic River Bend property and the Black Wolf Run golf course. The 800-acre, Kohler-owned River Wildlife Area is on the south side of the river adjacent to the Upper and Middle River. The wildlife area is used as a private hunting and fishing club. Two landfills are located adjacent to the Middle River. Land use adjacent to the Lower River and Harbor is primarily commercial and industrial with some residential areas.

The Sheboygan River is not used as a public water supply, but drains into Lake Michigan, which is used as a drinking water supply by Sheboygan, Sheboygan Falls, and Kohler. There are no public beaches along the river or harbor. There is considerable seasonal fishing in the Harbor and Lower and Middle River, while fishing is more limited in the Upper River. According to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) surveys, most fishing occurs during spring and fall salmon and trout runs. A fish consumption advisory is in effect for Sheboygan River fish. A similar fish consumption advisory is in place for Lake Michigan fish.

## Site History

In 1969, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers detected heavy metals and other pollutants in samples collected from dredged sediment. In 1974, U.S. EPA found elevated levels of lead, zinc, chromium, and arsenic in Sheboygan Harbor sediment. During routine sampling of fish from the Sheboygan River in 1977, the WDNR found elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the fish. The presence of PCBs and heavy metals was confirmed in 1979 during harbor dredging.

In 1985, the Sheboygan River and Harbor were proposed to be added to the National Priorities List (NPL). The NPL is a list of the nation's most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites. The site was officially added to the NPL in 1986. In April 1986, U.S. EPA and WDNR signed an agreement with Tecumseh Products Company, one of three parties potentially responsible for the contamination, to conduct the RI and Feasibility Study (FS) for the site. The FS develops and evaluates alternative methods of addressing contamination. The facility in Sheboygan Falls has been used by Tecumseh and its predecessor to produce small engines since the 1950s. As part of this operation, the use of PCB oils led to the release of PCBs into the river.

## Site Contamination

Tecumseh prepared the RI between 1987 and 1990. The results of the RI indicated PCBs and eight heavy metals are the "contaminants of concern" in the river and harbor sediment, with PCB concentrations higher in the Upper River than in downstream sections.

During the RI, several areas of the most heavily contaminated sediment were identified in the Upper River. U.S. EPA determined that these areas should be addressed as soon as possible. In 1990 and 1991, Tecumseh removed about 4,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment from these "hot spots." This sediment was stored in two containment facilities at Tecumseh's Sheboygan Falls plant. In addition, approximately 1,200 square yards of highly contaminated sediment were capped or "armored" to prevent contamination from entering the river.

After numerous pilot studies and tests of possible cleanup methods, Tecumseh began work on the FS in 1996. U.S. EPA is completing its review of the FS with the results to be summarized in a proposed plan fact sheet that will be sent to the site mailing list in Spring 1999 (see "Upcoming Schedule").

U.S. EPA and Tecumseh evaluated the potential health risks of the contamination in 1990 and 1993. The 1990 and 1993 studies found that routine consumption of fish from the river could pose a health concern. Eating certain waterfowl also posed a health concern according to these studies. The 1990 and 1993 studies used

conservative consumption rates for fish and waterfowl. These risks will be addressed in the upcoming proposed plan for cleanup.

## Natural Resource Trustees

U.S. EPA is the "lead agency" for the cleanup of the Sheboygan River and Harbor and other similar Superfund sites. U.S. EPA is given this authority under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) as amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act. However, CERCLA also gives several other state and federal agencies responsibility for protecting natural resources such as land, fish, wildlife, air, and water. These agencies are called "trustees" for these resources and CERCLA requires U.S. EPA to coordinate with them during Superfund cleanups.

The natural resource trustees involved in the Sheboygan River and Harbor cleanup are the WDNR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). U.S. EPA works with these agencies during the assessments, investigations, and planning for the Sheboygan River and Harbor site. U.S. EPA also notifies the trustees of negotiations with potentially responsible parties. The WDNR and FWS are trustees for fish and wildlife resources.

### New U.S. EPA Remedial Project Manager for Sheboygan River and Harbor Site

Tom Short, an engineer in U.S. EPA's Office of Superfund has recently replaced Steve Padovoni as U.S. EPA's Remedial Project Manager. Tom has been with U.S. EPA since 1990 and has managed contracts for several large Superfund cleanup projects in Ohio, Michigan and Illinois. Prior to working for U.S. EPA, Tom was an engineer with the Department of Defense for 7 years. Steve will continue to be involved in the site over the next several months to ensure a smooth transition as a proposed cleanup plan is developed.

NOAA is the trustee responsible for commercial interests related to the river, namely the Sheboygan Harbor and navigable portions of the Sheboygan River.

The trustees have been working with U.S. EPA since May 1998 to include their interests in the proposed plan for cleanup of

the Sheboygan River and Harbor. The trustees have met with U.S. EPA throughout the summer to ensure that a proposed cleanup plan is developed that includes restoration of these resources. A Record of Decision, the document outlining the final cleanup plan, will also include these elements.

## Upcoming Schedule

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Completed FS	Fall 1998
Proposed Cleanup Plan	Spring 1999
Public Comment Period	Spring 1999
Record of Decision	Summer 1999

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### For Additional Information

Anyone interested in learning more about the Sheboygan River and Harbor Superfund site is encouraged to review site-related documents available at the information repositories:

**Mead Public Library**  
710 North 8th Street  
Sheboygan, WI

**Sheboygan City Hall**  
828 Center Avenue, 2nd Floor  
Sheboygan, WI

As previously mentioned, several state and federal agencies are involved in the Sheboygan River and Harbor Superfund site. The following people may be contacted for more information:

### U.S. EPA Contacts

**Susan Pastor, P-19J**  
**Community Involvement**  
**Coordinator**  
(312) 353-1325  
pastor.susan@epa.gov

**Tom Short, SR-6J**  
**Remedial Project Manager**  
(312) 353-8826  
short.tom@epa.gov

**U.S. EPA Region 5**  
77 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Toll Free: 1-800-621-8431  
<http://www.epa.gov/region5>

### State of Wisconsin

The WDNR serves as a support agency to U.S. EPA on the Sheboygan River and Harbor site. The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services works with U.S. EPA to assess public health risks related to the site.

**Tom Wentland**  
**Project Manager**  
**WDNR**  
4041 North Richards Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53212  
(414) 229-0853  
wentlt@dnr.state.wi.us

**Henry Nehls-Lowe**  
**Epidemiologist**  
**Wisconsin Dept. of Health and**  
**Family Services**  
1414 East Washington Avenue, Room 96  
Madison, WI 53703-3043  
(608) 266-3479  
nehls@dhfs.state.wi.us

### Natural Resource Trustees

WDNR, NOAA and FWS are natural resource trustees involved in the site.

**Kathy Patnode**  
**Trustee Representative**  
**WDNR**  
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Madison, WI 53707  
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**Great Lakes Region**  
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BHW Federal Building  
Ft. Snelling, MN 55111  
(612) 713-5340  
david\_devault@mail.fws.gov

**Todd Goeks, SR-6J**  
**Trustee Representative**  
**National Oceanic and**  
**Atmospheric Administration**  
77 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60604  
(312) 886-7527  
crc5@hazmat.noaa.gov

## Mailing List Additions

If you did not receive this fact sheet in the mail, you are not on the mailing list for the Sheboygan River and Harbor Superfund Site. To add your name, or to make a correction, please fill out this form and mail it to:

### Susan Pastor

U.S. EPA Region 5  
Office of Public Affairs (P-19J)  
77 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Daytime) \_\_\_\_\_ (Evening) \_\_\_\_\_

*Once you are on the mailing list, you will automatically receive information from U.S. EPA regarding the Sheboygan River and Harbor Site.*



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**Sheboygan River and Harbor Update**

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